United Nations S/PV.4208

Security Council

Fifty-fifth year

Provisional

4208th meeting

Tuesday, 24 October 2000, 10 a.m.

New York

President	Mr. Gurirab	(Namibia)
Members	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Heinbecker
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Kassé
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Grainger
	United States of America	Ms. Soderberg

Agenda

Women and peace and security.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

00-70589 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Women and peace and security

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Belarus, Croatia, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Japan, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Mozambique, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, the United Arab Emirates, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Wensley (Australia), Mr. Ling (Belarus), Mr. Šimonović (Croatia), Mr. Zackheos (Cyprus), Mr. Atoki (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Mr. Aboulgheit (Egypt), Mr. Hussein (Ethiopia), Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala), Mr. Sharma (India), Mr. Widodo (Indonesia), Mr. Akasaka (Japan), Ms. Fritsche (Liechtenstein), Mr. Juwayeyi (Malawi), Mr. Santos (Mozambique), Mr. Powles (New Zealand), Mr. Brattskar (Norway), Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan), Mr. Sun Joun-Yung (Republic of Korea), Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore), Mr. Kumalo (South Africa), Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates), Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania) and Mr. Jokonya (Zimbabwe) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend invitations under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Angela King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Ms. King to take a seat at the Council table.

I invite Ms. Heyzer to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the council to document S/2000/693, which contains the text of a letter dated 12 July 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations.

I now invite members of the Council to view a short video presentation on women and peace.

A video tape was played in the Council Chamber.

The President: I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, my friend and brother, Kofi Annan.

The Secretary-General: Let me thank and congratulate the presidency of the Security Council for its initiative in holding this meeting on women and armed conflict. The theme chosen is crucial, for it brings together two vital parts of the United Nations mission. The Charter tells us that the Organization was created "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". It also proclaims the equal rights of men and women. We must live up to both challenges or we shall not succeed fully in either.

As this Council knows better than anyone, the nature of conflict has changed a great deal in the decades since our Charter was written. The age of inter-State wars has been replaced by the age of ethnic conflict. Militias have multiplied, and small arms have proliferated. International law has been flouted. Civilians not only make up the majority of victims; they are increasingly the targets of conflict. From rape and displacement to the denial of the right to food and

health care, women bear more than their fair share of the suffering.

But women, who know the price of conflict so well, are also often better equipped than men to prevent or resolve it. For generations women have served as peace educators, both in their families and in their societies. They have proved instrumental in building bridges rather than walls. They have been crucial in preserving social order when communities have collapsed.

We in the United Nations know at first hand the invaluable support women provide to our peacekeepers, by organizing committees, non-governmental organizations and church groups that help ease tensions and by persuading their menfolk to accept peace. Partly for that reason, we are making special efforts to recruit more women for our peacekeeping and peacemaking missions, and to make all our operations more aware of gender issues.

The United Nations has learned the hard way that peace and security depends on rapid response to early indications of conflict. We know that conflict prevention requires imaginative strategies. We know that conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building call for creative and flexible approaches. In all these areas, we have seen examples of women playing an important role — not least on my own continent, Africa.

And yet the potential contribution of women to peace and security remains severely under-valued. Women are still grossly under-represented at the decision-making level, from conflict prevention to conflict resolution to post-conflict reconciliation.

We are here today because we are determined to change that, and because we know that changing it is the responsibility of all of us — men and women alike. This Council, in its statement on International Women's Day this year, acknowledged that women and girls are particularly affected by the consequences of armed conflict. The Council recognized that peace is inextricably linked to equality between men and women and it declared that maintaining and promoting peace and security require women's equal participation in decision-making.

I am here today to ask the Council to do everything in its power to translate that statement into action; to help ensure that women and girls in conflict situations are protected, that perpetrators of violence against women in conflict are brought to justice, and that women are able to take their rightful and equal place at the decision-making table on questions of peace and security. I am confident that Ms. King, Ms. Heyzer and others who will speak here today will help show the way.

The President: The next speaker on my list is Ms. Angela King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure, and on whom I now call.

Ms. King: I am particularly honoured today, as Special Adviser on Gender Issues, to have the opportunity to speak in this debate, which is so historic, when for the first time the Council has decided to devote an entire open discussion to the topic "Women and peace and security".

It is only fairly recently that the experience of women and girls in armed conflict has been discussed, and then discussion has usually concentrated on their role as victims. Today's debate will show that we have come a long way in a relatively short time. Your country's strong leadership, Mr. President, in holding the landmark May seminar which marked this year's tenth anniversary of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group resulted in the historic Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action on "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations". This achievement has won universal admiration among all those fighting for women's right to participate in all aspects of the peace process. It and your distinguished chairing of the General Assembly's twenty-third special session, "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", which immediately followed in June, constitute important steps along the way to considering the United Nations peace operations from the point of view of both women and men.

Other important developments have led to today's meeting. They include the Council's decision to take a thematic approach to its work; the recognition that the Council gave — under the chair of Bangladesh — on International Women's Day, 8 March, to women as actors in the peace process; the discussion on the situation of women in Afghanistan, which took place in

April, led by the representative of Canada; and the Council's resolution 1314 (2000) of 11 August.

The timeliness of this discussion is also significant. The Secretary-General has just returned from an area where he undoubtedly had an opportunity to see at first hand the role women and men should play in their societies to bring about peace and to rebuild those societies. The discussion also coincides with the consideration of the Brahimi Panel's report (S/2000/809) on peace operations and its implementation.

There are three broad areas to be considered in the context of today's discussion: how armed conflict affects women; how women actually respond to conflict, the peace process and post-conflict reconstruction; and how we plan strategically for a future in which women are equal partners with men in enhancing our effectiveness in peace operations.

Today I would like to concentrate on the two latter points, drawing on my experience as Chief of Mission in the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA).

What do women actually do in conflict situations, and how do they respond? The Secretary-General has repeatedly emphasized the changing nature of war. He has noted that modern warfare is increasingly conducted within, rather than between, States, and that the Security Council is now called on to deal with such conflicts. He has stressed that more and more non-State actors are protagonists in armed conflict; even children become involved. The proliferation of small arms and the ease with which they can be acquired, clearly shown in the Department for Disarmament Affairs and Department of Public Information video documentary "Armed to the Teeth", has also added a new dimension.

The socio-economic fabric of a country has now to be the major focus of attention. Societal dynamics thus become a key guide to finding entry points into resolving disputes. Groups within each society, and especially women's groups, non-governmental, religious and other groups, have a major role to play. Whether these groups were formed before the conflict or during it is not important. What is important is that they must be part of all stages of the peace negotiations, in planning for the future, in rebuilding and in crafting preventive strategies to avoid conflict.

Often, those of us who have seen the value of women's participation in peace operations at first hand are challenged by the sceptics to present empirical rather than anecdotal findings. In this connection, I am pleased to report on the results of a joint three-year effort of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), my office and the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, a study that was supported by the generous funding of several Member States. This study, "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Operations" has just been finalized.

The study looks at five peace operations, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, El Salvador, Namibia and South Africa. It answers the sceptics by giving objective and empirical findings on what women staff do in missions; whether and how they influence the outcomes; and how their participating equally with men can improve the efficiency of United Nations peacekeeping. The Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action were informed by these findings.

Exactly what does this study tell us? It shows unequivocally that when there is a critical mass of women in a mission — at least 30 per cent — local women are more easily mobilized to join peace committees. This occurred in South Africa, El Salvador and Namibia, where women actively promoted voter education and the rights of individual women to vote. In other words, women's participation in United Nations missions empowers local women and may inspire them to organize for the achievement of a democratic society.

Women's participation has the capacity to expand the debate a little further so that it may encompass more diverse subjects, including those that may be more relevant to women and children. Women are frequently less hierarchical in dealing with local communities and listen more, thereby having better insights into the root causes of conflict. Local women are more likely to confide in women peacekeepers on such matters as rape and other sexual violence. The presence of a critical mass of women appears to foster confidence and trust among the local population, and this is critical to successful operations, such as in El Salvador. Women are active negotiators and able to see more clearly issues that affect women differently than men.

Women's participation in all aspects of a mission can help to break down stereotypes held by women in many local communities, especially where women peacekeepers serve in a broad spectrum of the activities of a mission. This has had a spin-off effect on the participation of local women in decision-making positions. Women political monitors are just as willing and capable of serving in dangerous or isolated areas as men, and do so just as effectively.

The study also shows that mixed teams of women and men, a significant proportion of women team leaders, women special representatives or heads of mission, or a conscious effort by a special representative to seek the best staff, whether women or men, has a positive influence on the outcome. Women also respond by participating in the troop-contributing countries' military and civilian police contingents. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has made strenuous efforts to encourage Member States to send women on missions, on the basis of equity, as their presence can assist in defusing potentially tense situations. Much more should be done in order to encourage women to enter this service.

What do this and other studies tell us about what local women do? There is abundant evidence to show that even when having to flee to safety with their families or protecting them in refugee or displaced-persons camps, women take on a number of peace-building activities.

Women are active at both formal and informal levels. With few exceptions, women are not present in formal peace negotiations. However, women have been part of these negotiations, as we saw in the field in Burundi, and in Guatemala and South Africa. Somali women helped to bring the clan leaders back into the negotiations at one stage and were permitted to join the negotiations as observers.

Most of the activities, however, take place at the informal level. Grass-roots women's organizations in several countries have sponsored peace education; encouraged child soldiers to lay down arms; organized groups advocating peace across party and ethnic lines; organized campaigns against small arms, such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) African Women's Committee on peace and development; influenced repatriation processes and established services for returning exiles, such as in Guatemala; contributed to ending conflict; negotiated the release of hostages; and established legal support groups to get recognition for women's rights to land and household property which may have been in the name of a spouse killed or "disappeared" in a conflict.

Women at the local level are a rich resource waiting to be systematically tapped by the international community. Many aspects of these informal activities have been encouraged, supported financially and documented by the United Nations and its agencies. In this connection, in addition to the work of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department for Disarmament Affairs should be mentioned. Special mention should also be made of the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) should also be credited with pioneering work at the national and grass-roots levels. Good practices have been identified, studied and published, including the study by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, "Women and Post-Conflict Reconstruction". The exchange of information on these practices has enabled the United Nations system to encourage States engaged in rehabilitation to work in partnership with and sustain women's groups and civil society engaged in these essential but often unrecognized activities. Capacity-building for leadership and governance led by UNDP and UNIFEM has greatly facilitated women's ability to play constructive roles.

These entities are all members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination's Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, which I chair. We have lately formed a Task Force on Women and Peace and Security to strengthen collaboration on this critical issue.

This brings me to our vision for the future. The basic blueprint appears in the Beijing Platform for Action, the Beijing + 5 outcome document, the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action. It also appears in the many powerful statements from

women's groups that we heard yesterday in the Council's Arria-formula meeting.

The planning of any mission must include gender equality aspects. The mandate of the mission and the guidelines for special representatives must clearly indicate that gender considerations must be integrated into the mission's goals and the head of mission be accountable. Each mission should have a plan for incorporating gender issues into all aspects of the mission's work. There should be a gender unit, adequately staffed and resourced to provide the necessary backstopping on the mission site, and one in DPKO for overall oversight. I am pleased to state that DPKO has established two such units — one in East Timor and one in Kosovo — and gender focal points in Sierra Leone and Western Sahara. All sectors of the transition or rebuilding process should take gender issues into account. Greater attention must be paid to ensuring the appointment of women as special representatives, in accordance with the Brahimi report and the call by women heads of State and Government of 5 September. The Council may wish to ensure that all the reports that it receives on missions contain information and data on the extent to which a gender perspective has been introduced and on the number and level of women working in the various missions. Working with the agencies on the ground, the political and development wings of the mission should organize the mobilization of community groups, especially women's groups, and expand the pool of skills needed to sustain the peace process. A roster of such groups could be kept by DPKO, in collaboration with regional bodies and agencies. The code of conduct for peacekeepers should be regularly updated and where there are infringements, there should be a continuation of apprehension and discipline. Should it be decided to appoint a new assistant secretary-general in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as proposed in the Panel's report, strong consideration should be given to appointing a woman to one of the three assistant secretary-general posts in the Department.

In closing, may I recall the main finding of the joint study made by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Division for the Advancement of Women. It was that the most important lesson learned is that lessons are not always learned. Lessons from Namibia and South Africa had little effect on Cambodia or Bosnia Herzegovina, for example. Gender equality issues are absolutely essential to the success of any peace operation. We cannot exclude half the world's resources from participating in peace.

The fundamental human right to have and to enjoy equality is a given. It was emphasized by the Beijing Conference and reaffirmed again in the Beijing +5 outcome document and even more so at the Millennium Declaration. There can be no peace without gender equality and no development without both peace and equality. Without the equal and fair participation of women in decision-making positions in the United Nations and also in Member States, as well as in this central organ of the United Nations, we will never achieve the vision outlined in the United Nations Charter. May this discussion and the decisions that follow be those in which we demonstrate that, at least in the area of women and peace and security, this is one lesson that we have learned and intend to put into action.

The President: I thank Ms. King for her kind words addressed to my country and to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure. I give her the floor.

Ms. Heyzer (United Nations Development Fund for Women): I am honoured to participate in the Council's first debate on women and peace and security, chaired by the Foreign Minister of Namibia. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and women worldwide congratulate the presidency for its vision in convening this historic event.

I want to begin by paying the kind of tribute that is necessary to the Secretary-General for his strong message and commitment, and for his presence here today. UNIFEM shares the views of Ms. King and fully supports her work to mainstream gender in peace support operations.

It is significant that this debate should be taking place on the first United Nations Day of this millennium, as many of the issues involved go to the heart of our Charter.

The Council's actions on the themes of conflict in Africa, the protection of civilians, and children and armed conflict set the stage for this debate, but the discussion today on women and peace and security has

a very specific focus. We are here today because the intertwining forces of conflict and gender inequality threaten international peace and security. We are here because women continue to be targeted in wars, because rape and sexual violence continue to be used as weapons of war, because the vast majority of all refugees and displaced people are women and children. We are here because women have played a leadership role in the cause of peace, but their efforts have not been recognized, supported or given the kind of reward that is necessary.

The subject of today's debate is close to all of our hearts. Members heard the voice of Agnes from Uganda, who spoke out because nearly all girls abducted into armed groups are forced into sexual slavery. The vast majority become infected with sexually transmitted diseases and, increasingly, HIV/AIDS. In addition, women and girls are forced into sex for safe passage, food and other kinds of protection. Women are seldom protected from these threats. Their aggressors are not punished. What kind of message does this send to the people who continue to rape, exploit, torture and mutilate?

We are here today to support collective action against the most chilling consequences of this destruction of women. That is the focus of today's debate: women's protection in armed conflict and their participation in peace processes.

The focus on human security and national security makes up the two sides of the same global coin. I would like to put it to the Council that, without international action, women caught in conflicts will have no security of any kind, whatever the definition, and that, without their participation, the peace process itself suffers, for there will be neither justice nor development. In your own words, Mr. President, women are half of every group and community. Are they therefore not half of every form of solution? How can we, in all good conscience, bring warlords to the peace table and not women?

For almost 10 years, UNIFEM has worked to provide assistance to women in crisis and supported their participation in the building of peace. I will not overstate our reach. We are a small Fund and our impact is based on synergetic partnership with sister funds, such as the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund, as well as with the women's movement.

We have shaped our activities for women in conflict situations around five points. These form the core of our agenda for peace and security and relate to specific actions the Council could take to improve the protection of women and support their peace-building efforts. If we are to deal fairly with women and girls in conflict, these must be acted upon with urgency.

First, as to understanding the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, no full-scale assessment has yet been undertaken. This must happen. We need to examine every aspect of the consequences of conflict for women in order to guide future action. Ironically, this has happened for children, but not yet for women, their primary caretakers and among those most affected by conflict.

But understanding the impact is simply not enough. We must also act with greater sensitivity. We know without question that unless there is such sensitivity, there will be severe consequences. This was the case in Kosovo last year. Thousands of displaced men, women and children had gathered together in a stadium. With a megaphone, an official made a broadcast announcement for all women who had been raped to report to a particular area. Not a single woman came forward. Not a single woman was prepared to risk the stigma or the potential effect of having identified herself publicly in this way. As a result, every single survivor lost the chance of holding her aggressors accountable and of receiving life-saving support. Understanding the way conflict affects women and girls is crucial to ensuring their protection and to designing the policies and programmes that are necessary.

Secondly, with respect to improving protection and assistance for women and girls, in my visits to war-torn countries, I have seen these gaps with painful clarity. I have heard about the unanswered fate of mothers and the thousands of children born of rape. In camps, I discovered that items as basic as sanitary towels were not considered essential humanitarian relief. In conflict after conflict, I have met the mothers of the disappeared. I have walked through valleys of widows — huge communities of women left alone to fend for themselves and their families. These women live each day choked with painful memories of their own torture and of that of their loved ones. They bleed

and live with physical and emotional scars and, as if this were not enough, they are also struggling to reclaim their property, their inheritance and their land. In fact, some have also to struggle to retain their children.

Protection of and humanitarian assistance for women are glaringly inadequate in the kind of examples that we have seen. We have seen the failure of political settlements to protect women's rights. This is at the very core of this debate.

Thirdly, as to supporting women's leadership in peace-building, women caught up in conflicts are activists, caretakers, providers and survivors. We know that some women participate actively in conflicts, but the vast majority have held their families and communities together.

From the grass roots to the peace table, we have supported the participation of women in peace-building. We try to leverage political, financial and technical support so that women can have an impact on peace efforts nationally. Guatemalan women, South African women and others have set inspiring examples of peace-building across class, clans, political affiliation and ethnicity. As you have seen on video, up until four months ago the situation of women and girls had been ignored in the Burundi process. A precedent was set in that country, and the entire peace agreement has benefited. Now, support for implementation remains a challenge.

Fourthly, with respect to bringing a gender perspective to intergovernmental peace and security efforts, peace support operations establish the framework for international and regional action. Much attention has been given to increasing the number of women in these operations, at the helm and among the ranks. Although a few women have served at the highest levels, I think it is sobering today to point out that of the 61 current Special and Personal Representatives and Envoys of the Secretary-General serving in peace support functions, not a single one is a woman.

The placement of gender advisers in Kosovo, East Timor and other countries has presented a new model if they can be adequately supported. But all such arrangements must involve women and provide gender experts in their design and implementation. There is no acceptable reason for protecting women in some countries and not others. I believe that women's concerns will only be addressed only when women, in significant numbers, are there to represent them. But having a woman commander will not alone ensure that the mandate of the operation deals with gender. Having a woman judge will not ensure that war crimes against women are prosecuted. There is more that we have to do.

Gender expertise must inform the planning of these operations from the very beginning. For example, in disarmament, reintegration must be designed to meet the special needs of women combatants, of the girls and women who have been abducted into armed groups or of the families of former soldiers who are trying to return to civilian life. Electoral systems must take women into account, as voters or as candidates. Civilian police must address the issues of trafficking and sexual violence which are associated with conflict. I name these few examples to show how the Security Council can help ensure that international and regional initiatives not only benefit women but are also strengthened by them.

Fifthly, with regard to supporting gender justice in the post-conflict case, resources are depleted after conflicts, infrastructure is destroyed and social, economic and political relationships are strained. The success of development depends on the use of every available resource, including people. Women who have held social and economic fragments together represent the most precious and under-used of these resources. Unless a country's legal and electoral frameworks deal with gender equality, then no matter what happens after conflict, no matter how peaceful a transition, the entire country will never have a fair chance at development.

During the transition to peace, a unique opportunity exists to put in place a gender-responsive framework for a country's development. Nowhere is this more possible than in East Timor. Last week during my visit there, I saw a country struggling to rebuild. I was inspired by the women of East Timor, together with the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, working to improve the form of legislation and to strengthen local capacity to advocate for gender-sensitive laws and policies.

Barely four months ago I had the privilege of leading an international group to Jerusalem to support a common women's agenda for peace in the Middle East. Far away from the limelight of formal negotiations, Palestinian and Israeli women have been struggling and

engaging in dialogue ever since the 1980s, when such contact was illegal. Back in June, they were determined to tackle the thorniest issues. Their ability to make headway on almost all the moot points, including Jerusalem, was fuelled by the sense of urgency they shared about the delays in implementing signed agreements. This was leading, in their view, to a dangerous erosion of public trust in the leadership of both sides and to the potential outbreak of violence. If only their concerns had been heard.

Today, I urge the leadership on both sides not to ignore women's roles and contributions in this process. I urge them to build on partnerships where they exist and which women have been able to shape.

The outcome of today's debate can go a long way towards sustaining peace. If I may, with the kind of humility that is needed, I will suggest a number of ways in which the Council could improve women's protection in conflict and support their role in peace-building.

First, the Council could ensure that human rights observation and verification and peacekeeping operations focus on gender-based violations and women's human rights. The security of women is the best indicator of the security of a nation. Any early warning system must take women's voices into account.

Secondly, the Council could call for all peacekeeping personnel to be trained in their responsibilities to women and children. The in-service training should be provided as soon as a mission is assembled. This is not meant to be a substitute for what needs to be done at the national level.

Thirdly, the Council could call for the elaboration of a code of conduct for peacekeeping personnel and the establishment of clear reporting on sexual violence in a peacekeeping environment. This should include enforcement and monitoring mechanisms for peacekeeping personnel, through the creation of an ombudsperson, an inspector general or an office created especially for that purpose.

Fourthly, the Council could ensure that field operations protect and support humanitarian assistance for women and girls, especially those who are refugees and displaced. Special measures should be taken to protect women and girls from rape and other forms of sexual violence.

Fifthly, the Council could ensure that the peace-building elements of an operation are gender-sensitive, particularly in designing the kind of disarmament programmes, in strengthening governance and public security institutions and in defining the role of civilian police. These are the first steps for ensuring that women are central to post-conflict development.

Sixthly, the Council could ensure that any support it offers to a peace process, any investigation of disputes or any attempts at settlement make explicit the need to involve women and address the substantive concerns they bring to the table.

Finally, the Council could deepen its commitment to women by supporting the study called for by Ms. Graça Machel for a full-scale assessment of the impact of armed conflict on women and of women's role in peace-building. This is long overdue. For our part, as UNIFEM we stand ready to support this call and any other that the Council deems necessary. We may be small but we are effective, and we can find the resources and the necessary support.

Women in conflict situations have special needs and have made important contributions to peace and security. Recognizing and supporting both of these aspects with equal vigour can prevent many lifetimes of untold sorrow and pain.

The President: I thank Ms. Heyzer for her kind words addressed to me.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Botswana and Rwanda in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda.

In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the Council's consent, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Legwaila (Botswana) and Mr. Mutaboba (Rwanda) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): It is a pleasure to see you, the Foreign Minister of Namibia, presiding over this historic open debate on women and peace and security. My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to you and to the delegation of Namibia for this initiative which demonstrates your country's commitment and your own personal commitment to the advancement of women.

We also wish to recall the leadership you provided as President of the twenty-third special session of the United Nations General Assembly, "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century." I also wish to express appreciation to the Secretary-General and to Ms. Angela King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and to Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), for their important statements.

The Council's treatment of the issue before us comes in the wake of the commemoration on 8 March of International Women's Day, when, for the first time, the Council gave recognition to the role of women in the peace process.

It will be recalled that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action identified the impact of armed conflict and other deep-rooted conflicts on women as one of its critical areas of concern. It recognized that the welfare of women is threatened by violence and destructive conflicts. Peace-building work is therefore fundamental to the health and welfare of women living in communities and societies suffering from deep-rooted and violent conflict.

Today's debate in the Security Council is therefore a timely recognition of the increasingly disproportionate effects of war on civilians, particularly on women and children, and the important leadership role of women in the prevention and resolution of armed conflict. It remains a matter of serious concern that women have become caught in the centre of violent conflict and often become the direct and deliberate victims of the most egregious abuses committed by parties to armed conflict. Girls and women continue to be victims of rape, trafficking, forced prostitution, abduction and torture. The video presentation we saw at the beginning of this meeting provided a poignant reminder of the plight of so many women throughout the world.

Despite these challenges, women have become increasingly effective participants at the peace table and have continued to assist in creating an enabling environment for conflict prevention, peacemaking, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction. The role of women in preserving social order and fostering reconciliation cannot be overlooked without serious consequences for the peace process, for, if peace is to be actively and effectively pursued, gender-based exclusion must be addressed. Indeed, we must recognize that sustainable peace can hardly be achieved if the experiences and perspectives of some 50 per cent of the population are not given the attention they deserve.

Yesterday, members of the Council had an opportunity, during an Arria-formula meeting, to exchange views with representatives of civil society. We heard from representatives of non-governmental organizations, working at the grass-roots level in many countries, about the need for sustained attention to the plight of women victims of violent conflict and their crucial role in fostering a culture of peace in their communities. The recommendations that emanated from that meeting deserve the attention of the Council, particularly because they came directly from women who are victims, as well as participants in seeking peace.

One of the conclusions drawn from yesterday's discussion, which we strongly support, is the need to ensure women's adequate representation at all levels of the decision-making process. The role of women in conflict prevention has in many parts of the world proved important, and, in this context, comprehensive and systematic measures undertaken to prevent the resurgence or escalation of conflict by civil society, including grass-roots women's organizations, are particularly noteworthy and deserve the support of the international community. We therefore support the call by Ms. Graça Machel, to which Ms. Heyzer alluded, for a study on women and armed conflict.

The initiatives undertaken by women in Somalia, in Burundi, in East Timor, in Guatemala, in Sierra Leone and in many other countries to contribute to the creation of a peaceful and secure environment point in many respects to the important role of women as equal partners in securing peace. In Somalia, women have effectively mobilized civil society to promote dialogue among the warring factions and have given invaluable support to the national peace process. We certainly

hope that women will find their place in the Government when it is constituted.

These efforts, which have recently engaged the attention of the Council, point unequivocally to the strategic importance of women in relation to peace. However, despite the role of women in promoting peace and the progress made in implementing various international agreements, much remains to be done to ensure that women are increasingly seen as equal partners. The Windhoek Declaration, adopted in Namibia in May 2000, represents a valuable step in highlighting the importance of this issue and of mainstreaming a gender perspective into peace support operations.

In recent assessments of United Nations peace operations, a number of important elements which are relevant to the incorporation of a gender dimension in peacekeeping have unfortunately been overlooked. It is also a matter of concern for my delegation that women are still under-represented in decision-making in the area of conflict resolution. It is in this context that, while we recognize the important recommendations contained in the Brahimi report, we call for the implementation of these recommendations, including, where appropriate, the participation of women at all levels.

My delegation recognizes the steps that the Secretary-General has taken to appoint women as special representatives and special envoys, but we believe that much more needs to be done, and in this we call upon Member States, because it is Member States that have a responsibility to present for consideration qualified women for appointment at high levels.

It is important not only to address the conceptual and structural framework of peace operations but also to ensure that attention is given to those institutional elements which determine the participation of those with the capacity to make a difference. The record of women in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building should certainly be taken into account.

My delegation fully supports the view that comprehensive gender considerations should be incorporated into peacekeeping missions. In support of this approach, Member States should ensure that they increase the number of women in their military and civilian police forces who are qualified to serve in peace operations. Additionally, Member States need to ensure that gender sensitivity is incorporated into their national training programmes for military and civilian police designated to participate in peacekeeping.

The sensitization of personnel to the needs and vulnerabilities of women is critical and must be complemented by concrete steps to deal promptly with violations of international human rights and humanitarian law committed by peacekeeping personnel, particularly those against women and girls. Personnel involved in United Nations peace-building activities should also be given appropriate training on the protection and rights of women as a matter of priority.

In this connection, we note the existence of gender focal points in some United Nations missions, including in East Timor, Kosovo and Sierra Leone, and, based on the lessons learned in these missions, we believe that consideration must be given to establishing gender units in all peacekeeping missions. Ending impunity for sexual and gender-based violence in situations of conflict remains a matter for priority attention. Crimes such as rape, sexual torture, forced impregnation and sexual slavery continue to represent serious violations of the rights of women. My delegation welcomes the fact that the International Criminal Court has defined these crimes as grave breaches of international law. We stress the importance of bringing to justice those who violate the rights of women, and we note the attention that has been given to prosecuting such crimes in the International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia.

It is not only important that women be allowed to participate in peace operations, but that they be given special attention in reconstruction and post-conflict peace-building initiatives. Given that women have been particularly victimized during conflict, special attention also needs to be given to their needs and potential in formulating and implementing national rehabilitation, reconstruction and development programmes. In this context, the Council must ensure that special attention is given to the needs of women in reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction. The involvement of refugee and internally displaced women in the design and management of humanitarian activities represents also an important element. The full implementation of gender mainstreaming in the post-conflict reconstruction period should not be overlooked.

We would like to commend the Secretary-General for his commitment and initiatives aimed at integrating a gender sensitive approach within the Organization. This was emphasized in the report to the Millennium Assembly. It is also in this context that we welcome the report on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective In Multidimensional Peace Operations, prepared by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in cooperation with the Department for the Advancement of Women.

We wish to thank Assistant Secretary-General King for presenting the results of this study to the Council this morning. The study emphasizes the impact that the participation of women can have on United Nations peacekeeping missions. We also thank her for the recommendations for future action, which the Council will consider later this month in the context of the draft resolution we expect to adopt. As the Beijing Platform for Action so aptly reminds us, in a world of continuing instability and violence, the implementation of cooperative approaches to peace and security is urgently needed. Women cannot be left out of the equation.

Today, as we celebrate United Nations Day, it is fitting that we draw attention to the role of women as agents for the promotion of peace, security and development. The time has come for us to move from rhetoric to action. The women of the world expect no less from the Security Council.

The President: I thank the representative of Jamaica for her kind words addressed to my country and to me.

Ms. Soderberg (United States): The United States warmly welcomes this open debate on women and peace and security. We pay a special tribute to Secretary-General Annan for his remarks and fully concur with his report statement:

> "Equality of rights, opportunities and access to resources between men and women are fundamental requirements" (*A/52/871, para. 89*)

in building a durable peace.

I want to join Ambassador Durrant in paying a special tribute to you, Mr. President, and to Ambassador Andjaba, for your leadership in bringing about this important meeting. I also want to pay a special warm welcome to Ms. Angela King, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and to Ms. Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women. This invitation this morning is long overdue and I hope that this body will meet the challenge that you have put to us today. It is an historic challenge that you put before us. We warmly welcome that.

I also want to pay a special welcome to our guests in the gallery. I think your participation and support are very important and I think this is the first time I have ever heard applause in this Chamber. So you are enlivening it.

Today's meeting must not only make us more aware of the important role women play in preventing conflict, encouraging reconciliation and helping to rebuild conflict-ridden societies, but it also must spur us to concrete action. We, in the international community, have failed to make maximum use of the contributions of women in our efforts to promote peace and security throughout the world. As Secretary of State Albright pointed out in a recent speech to a group of businesswomen, "in too many places, women remain an undervalued and underdeveloped human resource."

We applaud the unwavering efforts of the United Nations and its specialized agencies to confront problems that mostly affect women. The work of these bodies and the international community's moral and financial support for such efforts has changed the lives of many, both young and old. Working together, we have taken steps to promote equality of opportunity, educate women and girls, change the unbalanced inheritance and divorce laws, advance political and economic rights and eradicate traditional practices harmful to women and girls.

Much of our attention has been directed toward protecting women, especially from the devastating effects of armed conflict, including forced displacement, trafficking of women, torture, rape and other acts of sexual violence, as well as a host of other crimes. For example, the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights focused on women solely as victims of armed conflict. While the issue of protection of women cannot be ignored, I hope that Security Council action will emphasize the leadership role women can and should play in restoring peace.

Women are an under-utilized positive force for peace. The Fourth World Conference on Women recognized that they must be fully involved in preventing and resolving conflicts. We must actively promote formal mechanisms, which support a

consistent female presence at the peace table, in peacekeeping operations and in the peace building efforts to reconstruct institutions vital to lasting stability.

The Secretary-General, by appointing qualified women to visible positions of influence, has set a laudable example for us all to follow. Deputy Secretary-General Louise Frechette, High Commissioners Mary Robinson and Sadako Ogata, the United Nations Children's Fund's Carol Bellamy and the World Food Programme's Catherine Bertini, to name just a few, demonstrate daily that women do make a difference in defusing conflicts and promoting equality, peace and security. The challenge before us is to emulate their achievements in other international and regional organizations, in national Governments and across all levels of society. The United States applauds the appointment of these women, but we want to see more done.

In particular, we need more women as Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, as special envoys and as human rights investigators and monitors. We hope the Secretary-General will strive to appoint more, fully qualified women to these positions, as well as those within his own Secretariat. We strongly encourage Member States to bring such candidates to his attention and to support the idea of the United Nations maintaining a roster of qualified women maintained as part of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System.

We need more than influential women at the highest levels of power and prestige. The United Nations must ensure that women's voices are heard wherever the United Nations assists in the settlement of conflicts and in post-conflict peace-building. With all due respect to my colleagues, just look around this room. A good place to start would be for Member States to appoint more women as ambassadors to the United Nations. Certainly one woman Permanent Representative, the distinguished Patricia Durrant, out of 15 on the Security Council, is at least 6 or 7 too few. Ten women out of 189 Permanent Representatives is a sad commentary on the state of women in leadership positions of Member States. If we are to heed President Theo-Ben Gurirab's challenge that we all just heard in the video to make women half of every solution, Member States must be able to do better than five per cent.

In all phases of peacekeeping and peace-building missions the presence of women must be visible and consistent. When possible, fact-finding missions should include gender advisors and the terms of reconciliation and reconstruction should draw on the expertise of women's community groups. The immediate aftermath of a conflict provides a unique window of opportunity to rebuild, with the equal participation of women, the public security institutions vital to lasting stability. In order to facilitate this, States should be committed to gender balance in their contributions to civilian police and other peacekeeping contingents and to assisting other States in achieving a gender-balanced perspective.

In place after place, from Northern Ireland to Guatemala to South Africa, we see that women are most effective when they are able to organize and be heard. Our First Lady's involvement in the organization Vital Voices has demonstrated around the world this fact time and again. We, as members of the Security Council, cannot be content with token representation of half of the world's population. The Security Council should consider establishing a very specifically mandated expert panel or working group to report on mechanisms that will ensure equal representation of women in peacekeeping and peace-building operations.

We also need to prepare our United Nations peacekeepers for encounters with the entire population in a mission area. This means that peacekeepers — military, civilian and civil servants — should be trained in gender issues; and it means that they who violate women's most basic rights must be brought to justice. The training should focus on codes of conduct and cultural and societal norms with respect to women, and on the study of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

At managerial levels training should include the participation of women in institution-building, particularly in rule-of-law areas. The Training Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should develop exportable modules that may be used in national and regional programmes, and all United Nations training programmes must include elements on gender issues.

We encourage States to assist in other meaningful ways as well. The United States, for example, has provided funding to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to support the

Bosnian Women's Initiative, which promotes the reintegration of women into the economy. It emphasizes training, legal assistance and support for micro-enterprise projects. Likewise, the United States has supported the Rwanda Women's Initiative to address refugee women's reintegration. The Department of State has also provided support for the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, which operates in Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and the Sudan. Those programmes not only provide services to women in war-torn areas, but they also seek to integrate them into the political and economic lives of their countries.

As we move forward we should take care that our efforts to further empower women in no way disadvantage men. We should strive for equality, not special treatment. What we really need is a commitment from Member States of the United Nations, the Secretariat and all concerned to honour the obligations and promises already made to women. We should now look ahead to concrete initiatives in support of those promises.

In closing, let me again commend you and your delegation, Mr. President, for calling this important meeting today. I hope this meeting will be the beginning of regular discussions in this Chamber, and that one day there will be equal gender representation around this table and throughout these halls.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for her kind words addressed to me and to my Permanent Representative.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I would first of all like to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to Ambassador Andjaba, for turning the attention of the Security Council to such an important subject as the one before us today.

I would also like to take this opportunity to declare my country's interest in any exchange of views in the Council having to do with humanitarian concerns resulting from conflict situations. We welcome the fact that the Council has given particular attention in recent years to such varied aspects of conflict situations as the plight of refugees and displaced persons, the protection of children in armed conflict, the protection of civilians during armed conflict and the protection of humanitarian personnel.

All these topics having been considered and debated in recent months, it is certainly worthwhile to underscore the importance of today's topic of debate: women and peace and security. The Council's participation in this area is particularly valuable, as the struggle to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women — and in particular in conflict situations — and to promote their rights is far from over, and should mobilize us all.

As has just been eloquently stated by the Secretary-General, Ms. King and Ms. Heyzer, women and girls were, and continue to be, the primary targets of all sorts of discriminatory violence. Indeed, they are among the first victims of armed conflict and are often reduced to the role of human shields in the hands of belligerents. Along with children, women represent 80 per cent of refugees and displaced persons, and are the first to suffer the worst acts of sexist violence, in particular rape and other forms of sexual abuse. They also constitute the majority of the victims of anti-personnel landmines, and are the most exposed to the scourge of HIV/AIDS because of increased sexual violence and the failure of health systems. As new conflicts erupt and tension and warfare intensify in various parts of the world, the number of poor and defenceless women suffering the horrors of violence and displacement increases, their traditional role is often changed overnight and their workload increases considerably.

The rights of women and girls constitute an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. Their suffering in armed conflict is a violation of international law on the protection and rights of civilians, which is fully applicable to women and girls, in particular the 1949 Geneva Convention and the obligations under its Additional Protocol of 1977 and the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol of 25 May 2000. In this regard, we join the appeals made to the parties to every armed conflict to scrupulously and fully respect international law. We also believe that it is up to States to put an end to impunity and to punish those found guilty of crimes, including extortion and acts of sexist violence, against women and girls.

We encourage the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all multidimensional peace operations, both at the national and international levels. We also encourage the undertaking of an analysis of gender equality in order to promote gender mainstreaming

during the planning of policies, strategies and programmes for peace and security.

In addition to Tunisia's commitment to gender equality and its policy of fostering the rights and improving the status of women, we recognize the important role women can play in all areas, including in conflict prevention, the maintenance of peace and peace-building. In this connection, we support the participation of women in peacekeeping operations and in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. As women are the ones most exposed to the devastating effects of anti-personnel landmines, we stress the importance of educating them about the dangers of mines and about the intensive use of mine-detection techniques.

I would also like to draw attention to the adverse effects on women and girls of sanctions, which increase their vulnerability. Recent experience has indeed shown that sanctions have extremely negative consequences on civilians, and in particular on children and women.

Apart from their role in the economic and social spheres, women are increasingly playing an active role in the area of peace. In this regard, we would like to express our appreciation for the leading role played in the United Nations system by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), one of whose top priorities is the elimination of all forms of violence against women. UNIFEM must continue its efforts to promote the effective implementation of international conventions, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

In that regard, we support UNIFEM's efforts to promote women's participation in the decision-making process at all levels of peace-building, as well as its efforts in developing women's capacity-building in the area of conflict prevention and resolution. Moreover, the multidimensional nature of peacekeeping operations — in particular with regard to their political aspect, the protection of children, the holding of elections, refugee reintegration, humanitarian assistance and the protection of humanitarian workers, demining, institutional capacity-building at the local level and human rights — offers women an opportunity to contribute to peace and security, which will definitely help to improve the protection of women and young girls in situations of armed conflict.

We believe that women's commitment to peace is crucial in ensuring that peace agreements signed by political and military factions hold. We are also convinced that there must be real change not only in the words of the laws themselves, but also in people's mindsets and in social practices.

We hope that today's debate will help break that silence and that it will lead to a denunciation of violence against women in all its forms — physical, psychological and moral — especially in armed conflict. We wish also to express our support for initiatives and institutional measures to protect women and ensure their safety and security, particularly in armed conflict; we appeal to all States to cooperate to that end.

Finally, we emphasize the importance of implementing appropriate preventive measures to resolve conflicts, especially the use of dispute-settlement mechanisms set up by the United Nations and by other organizations such as the Organization of African Unity. We stress further the importance of the effective contribution that women can make in this regard.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me begin, Sir, by saying how pleased my delegation is to see you presiding over this open debate. Your vast experience and ability were amply demonstrated throughout the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly and during the preparation and unfolding of the Millennium Summit. Argentina acknowledges and appreciates the traditional concern of the Government of Namibia with respect to the struggle for gender equality and for the promotion and protection of the rights of women — a concern shared by all other members of the Southern African Development Community and throughout the continent of Africa.

It is therefore no surprise that it is at the initiative of the Government of Namibia that the Council is today holding an open debate with a view to contributing to a better understanding of the relationship between women and international peace and security. We warmly welcome today's discussion of that topic.

Our thanks go also to Ms. Angela King, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), for their statements.

On the many occasions when the Security Council has considered the link between women and peace and security, it has generally been to condemn the appalling consequences of armed conflict for women, as victims of violence, trafficking, slavery, anti-personnel landmines and forcible displacement. Here, the Argentine delegation will continue, as it has done in the past, tirelessly to uphold the imperative need for full respect for international humanitarian and human-rights norms.

War crimes against women and girls, as recognized by the International Criminal Court in its Rome statute, must not go unpunished. We take this opportunity to urge parties to armed conflicts to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, especially rape and other forms of sexual abuse.

Similarly, the Argentine Government voices its support for the creation of some kind of system to prevent sexual violence, exploitation and trafficking in women and girls among both civilian and military populations, including suitable procedures for the lodging of complaints that would protect the identify of informants, as well as mechanisms to supervise peacekeeping personnel. It seems to us that realities increasingly demand that a gender dimension must be present in all field operations.

My delegation believes that conflicts with an impact on women pose a grave threat to the future of generations to come, undermine the foundations of the safety and security of families and social protection systems and create the worst of climates for the moral, political and socio-economic survival of the communities in question. We vigorously condemn the manipulation of any conflict situation by the victors to deny women and girls their fundamental human rights, in particular the right to physical integrity, food, proper housing, education, employment and health services. We therefore continue to support all Council initiatives with a particular focus on the special needs of women affected by armed conflict.

We will also support measures that the Secretary-General may decide to take to ensure that peacekeeping personnel receive proper training on gender issues, especially during post-conflict repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration and reconstruction. Similarly, we welcome any proposal aimed at greater gender awareness on the part of Member States, so that this will be reflected in national training programmes for military personnel and civilian police serving in the field.

My delegation wishes now to refer not to the international community's unquestionable moral imperative to provide special protection for women and children during armed conflict, but rather to the need to understand that there is an important role that women can and must play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building. It is worth recalling that on 8 March 2000, on International Women's Day and in the context of negotiations in the Preparatory Committee for the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, on Beijing + 5, the then President of the Security Council, Ambassador Chowdhury of Bangladesh, issued a press statement on behalf of the Council (Press release SC/6816), which observed that

> "peace is inextricably linked with equality between women and men".

Now, more than seven months later, today's historic debate is lending new power to that avowal.

Armed conflict has a special and disproportionate impact on women, and it is thus right to conclude that women have their own views which must be heeded in discussions of the best ways to avoid or settle conflicts and of how to organize the future of communities that have been affected by such conflicts. But, unfortunately, that is not how matters stand. Women are not sufficiently well represented at the decision-making level in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Argentina stresses the need for women to play a meaningful role in formulating policies and programmes to that end.

Here, we take note with satisfaction of the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations. As we have been doing elsewhere within the Organization, we urge the Secretary-General to appoint more women as Special Representatives and Special Envoys, and as his spokeswomen during missions of good offices related to peace and preventive diplomacy. We also appeal to Member States to take due account of the gender perspective when making national, regional and international appointments.

We encourage the participation of women in the negotiation of peace agreements, in all mechanisms for the implementation of such agreements and in the process of post-conflict reconstruction. Here, we urge that outmoded stereotypes of women's roles be abandoned.

In conclusion, Argentina hails the work towards greater awareness of gender issues in the context of armed conflict that has been taking place through the activities of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, of the various funds and programmes of the United Nations, such as UNIFEM, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and of local and international women's organizations. We encourage them to continue their efforts.

The President: I thank the representative of Argentina for the kind words he addressed to my country and to me.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) *(spoke in Chinese)*: I should like at the outset, Sir, to thank you for presiding over this meeting and to express our appreciation to the delegation of Namibia for its initiative in convening it. I should like also to thank the Secretary-General for his statement and to express our deep appreciation for the statements made by his Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. Angela King, and by the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Ms. Noeleen Heyzer. Both statements touched on a number of important issues and also contained a number of important recommendations that merit serious consideration by the Council.

Women play an irreplaceable role in the creation of human civilization and in the promotion of social development. In China, there is a popular saying that "women hold up half of the sky". Without the full participation of women, therefore, our efforts to maintain international peace and security can be neither fruitful nor lasting.

However, women, more often than not, are the direct and principal victims of war and armed conflict. Given that the Security Council's primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security, today's open debate on "Women and peace and security" will help the Council to better fulfil its mandate, entrusted to it by the Charter of the United Nations.

My delegation condemns all violent acts committed against women in time of armed conflict, and it urges all parties to conflicts strictly to abide by international humanitarian and human rights law. We also call on all Governments to investigate and bring to justice those who commit crimes against women. We hope also that the international community will intensify its efforts to protect and assist conflict-affected women and help them return to their homeland and resume their normal lives. We call on all concerned States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations to enhance their cooperation in this regard.

We also encourage women actively to participate in conflict prevention and settlement and in post-conflict reconstruction, and we hope that the international community will create favourable conditions in this regard.

I would like here to pay tribute to the role played by women in non-governmental organizations. We hope that women will also play a greater role in peacekeeping operations, in order better to assist women who have been affected by war and conflicts. Women should participate also in post-conflict reconstruction efforts. We would be encouraged to see, some day in the future, in a war-torn area, a peacekeeping operation composed entirely of women.

In our opinion, women do not fully participate in our work not because they are not capable of doing so but because we have not given this question sufficient attention. We look forward to an effective training programme in this regard.

In June, the United Nations convened, here in New York, a special session on the issue of women. The Political Declaration adopted at that session called on all Governments and countries to intensify their joint efforts in order better to protect women's rights and interests. Today's open debate could be considered part of the follow-up of the June special session. We hope that this meeting will make a significant contribution to enhancing the protection afforded to women and that it will lead to effective follow-up actions. We are hopeful also that this momentum will be maintained within the United Nations system. We believe that a full assessment, within the United Nations system, of the impact of armed conflict on women would be most useful.

The question of women is a cross-cutting one which the United Nations agencies have been deliberating for many years. The work of the Council should be synergetic with that of other agencies, for only in this way can we motivate all parties and players to make full use of the advantages provided by the United Nations system as a whole in order to achieve the best possible results.

The President: I thank the representative of China for the kind words he addressed to my delegation and to me.

Mr. Grainger (United Kingdom): The representative of France will shortly be making a full statement on behalf of the European Union, which the United Kingdom supports. I will therefore limit myself to a few additional points.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock, the British Permanent Representative, has repeatedly said that a careful consideration of the needs and rights of ordinary people should be at the heart of the Security Council's activities on conflict. We need to remember that civilians, so often the tragic victims of conflict, are individuals in specific circumstances.

The human toll of conflict hits women and girls hardest. They are exploited and targeted, often deliberately, as a strategic weapon. They form the majority of refugee populations and of the internally displaced. And they continue to be at risk even after the conflict, as the international human rights and humanitarian standards that should guarantee their security are all too rarely implemented.

We cannot treat this situation purely as a symptom of conflict. It is also a cause. Because of women's unique position in the social fabric, these threats continue to damage the long-term prospects for peace and security. This is the challenge that the Security Council faces. Much of what needs to be done will have to be incorporated into our regular work, as we examine individual country situations. But let us use this debate, and the draft resolution that will eventually be adopted, as an opportunity to push forward the agenda. We need to focus on concrete deliverables in areas where we can really make a difference.

We should concentrate in particular on three themes.

First, how do we make sure that the rights and particular concerns of women and girls are properly considered and acted on in the Council's everyday work?

We need the right sort of information to know what the problem is and the right sort of analysis to make our judgements. This is particularly the case when considering concrete operational issues, such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, where women and girls may have different needs from those of male combatants.

One way of doing this would be to encourage the Secretary-General to incorporate analysis on gender issues in his regular reporting to the Council on country-specific issues. The Brahimi report recommends that an information and strategic analysis secretariat be established to improve the United Nations capacity to gather and analyse information. We support this recommendation and hope that gender expertise will be incorporated in this secretariat.

Secondly, what can we do to mainstream gender within the objectives and organizational structure of peacekeeping operations? Where the Secretary-General has recommended that specific gender concerns should be addressed in peacekeeping mandates, we should incorporate them into the heart of our decisions. Gender expertise should be included in peacekeeping operations and their staff mandated and provided with the resources to address women's particular concerns. Peacekeeping operations should also work closely with non-governmental organizations and civil society on the ground in these areas.

We need to develop greater sensitivity to the impact of peacekeeping operations on local populations. At yesterday's Arria-format meeting, we heard some dreadful tales of abuses of women's rights committed by the peacekeepers that are meant to provide stability and protection. That is why the United Kingdom and Canada have jointly financed work, in collaboration with the Lester Pearson Peacekeeping Training Centre, to produce training materials on gender for peacekeepers. We hope that this work will be of use to as wide a spectrum of troop-contributing countries as possible. We also encourage the Secretary-General to provide training on the rights and particular needs of women and girls to civilian staff serving in peacekeeping operations.

My third point is that we should not fall into the trap of seeing women and girls only as the victims of armed conflict. They can also play key roles in unlocking the door to peace. The full representation of women's groups at all levels of peace negotiations is vital to building sustainable peace and security. With this in mind, the United Kingdom is embarking on an ongoing programme of support for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to help it to build its capacity to act as a catalyst for women's participation in peace processes. This excellent programme will involve a review of activities by women's civil society and the development of an information repository and local field-based activities. We are proud to be able to help.

The United Kingdom is very pleased that Namibia has organized this timely debate today. We look forward to listening to the views of non-members, just as we welcomed the spirited discussion that took place with non-governmental organizations at yesterday's Arria-formula meeting. We particularly welcome the role of Angela King and of UNIFEM in providing support and advice in this process. However, we should not forget that it is the responsibility of all those involved in peace and security to ensure that gender considerations are mainstreamed into United Nations activities.

The next step is to negotiate a resolution that makes a difference. We should focus it on the areas where results can be achieved and concentrate on delivering a step change in the way the Council addresses the special needs of women and girls. The United Kingdom stands ready to play its full part in driving this important agenda forward.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for the kind words he addressed to the Namibian delegation.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): Finally, the voices of women have reached the Security Council. It is significant that today — United Nations Day — we are beginning to address, in an open meeting of the Security Council, not only how conflicts shape the lives of women, but also how women are coming together to shape peace and security and what the Council can do to facilitate women's involvement in United Nations peacemaking and peace operations.

Yesterday, the Council members heard the concerns of civil society representatives on this issue and interacted with them. It was a so-called Arria-formula meeting. Although intended to be participatory, it took place behind closed doors and there were no official records. It would have been so much better to have had those presentations here in the Council Chamber.

Nevertheless, the women have spoken; they have made their recommendations to the Council. The onus is now on the Council to act. Through today's meeting, and through the resolution we will be adopting in a few days, we must send a powerful message that women need peace and, more importantly, that peace needs the involvement of women.

We wholeheartedly congratulate Namibia, in particular Ambassador Andjaba and his team, for their leadership in organizing these historic meetings of the Security Council on women and peace and security. Throughout your presidency of the General Assembly last session, Mr. President, we saw your commitment to women's issues. It is gratifying for us to see you presiding over this important meeting today. These meetings of the Council are the result of the efforts of numerous women and their organizations, which have been demanding for some time now that the Council formally take up the matter. Today, we pay a tribute to their dedication and hard work in making it happen.

We thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the important statement he made this morning, in which he highlighted areas that need attention from the Security Council. We also acknowledge the contributions of the two women who addressed the Council this morning. Ms. Angela King and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer have played a great role in making women's issues matter in the United Nations, and no doubt they will continue their important work.

Bangladesh is fully committed to realizing the potential of women in promoting peace. We feel proud to have, in our Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, a woman leader of great vision and courage who is actively contributing to peace at the national level as well as globally, spearheading the culture of peace and non-violence.

Bangladesh is proud to have had the privilege of taking a pioneering step in the Security Council when it presided over the Council's first-ever pronouncement on women, armed conflict and peace on 8 March this year, International Women's Day. In that statement, the Council members recognized that peace is inextricably

linked with equality between men and women and affirmed that women's equal access to and equal participation in power structures and their full involvement in the prevention and resolution of conflict are essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

Our work in the Security Council on this issue must be set in the broader context of the commitments of the Beijing process, both the 1995 Conference and the 2000 review, which show us the way forward. The Council's decisions affect women in situations of armed conflict. It is therefore only appropriate that those decisions be made keeping women squarely in the picture.

We believe that the Council has to take into account three broad areas. The first is the impact of conflict on women and girls. As the nature of conflict shifts in a post-cold-war, globalized world, civilians, in particular women and children, are increasingly victims. Women and girls form the majority of refugees and internally displaced persons. They are in particular danger of being harmed and abused and of facing gender-based and other, unimaginable, gross human rights violations.

As a participant in the Council mission to Sierra Leone, I have seen at first hand the ravages of war on women in that country. The Security Council must demand of all parties to armed conflict that they comply fully with international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, and take special measures in this regard. To respond to their needs, all United Nations peace operations must include a gender unit. The human rights components of peace operations should include women's rights in all their documents and reports.

At the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration sites, the different needs of women and men combatants and accompanying family members must be addressed. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court recognized war crimes against girls and women. The Security Council must add its voice in ensuring that there is no impunity for gender-based war crimes.

The second area is the involvement of women in the peace process. From Burundi to Somalia, and from Northern Ireland to the Middle East and Cambodia, women have shown a great capacity as peacemakers. They have assumed an activist role while holding together their families and communities. At the grass-roots and community levels, women have organized to resist militarization, to create space for dialogue and moderation and to weave together the shattered fabric of societies.

We must ensure that women get more avenues to promote peace, not only at the local level, but also at the national, regional and global levels. By bringing their experience to the peace table, women can inject into the peace process a practical understanding of the various challenges faced by civilian populations. The mechanisms that come out of such involvement are naturally more sensitive to the needs of civilians and therefore more sustainable and useful.

Women also have a great role to play in promoting in strife-torn societies a culture of peace, which lies at the root of lasting peace and reconciliation. Unless there is a culture of peace, with women at its helm, long-term solutions will elude us.

I come finally to United Nations peace operations and women. At the decision-making level and on the ground there has to be more representation of women. There has been a demand for more women special representatives of the Secretary-General. We welcome that. At the same time, we have to be careful to avoid tokenism. We should go not only for visibility in the representation of women, but for representation that is wider and more effective.

Bangladesh has begun to send its women to peace operations, with the first five civilian police deployed in East Timor. The armed forces in Bangladesh have recently opened their doors to women and will soon be having women in command positions. As a country that has contributed over the years to the most difficult United Nations missions, we shall be doing our part by sending more women peacekeepers in future.

One area where the United Nations and its Member States must act urgently is in improving the training of peacekeeping personnel by fully gender-sensitizing them. The peacekeepers must never violate the trust the civilian populations place in them and can have no impunity for their actions.

We believe that it is an opportune moment for the United Nations, and in particular the Security Council, to do much more than it has done so far in promoting women's issues in peacekeeping. The Brahimi Panel's report (S/2000/809) is under active consideration. We

have already welcomed its useful recommendations. We noted, however, that a gender dimension of peacekeeping and peace support operations must be highlighted; it is a missing link as far as the report is concerned.

We support the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations". We believe that the actions identified in the Declaration can complement and fill in the blanks in the recommendations of the Brahimi Panel's report.

As I have said, the women have spoken. They have made it clear that they are willing to shoulder their responsibilities and take charge of their lives and peace in their societies. The Council in particular, and the United Nations at large, has to respond through concrete actions.

The President: I thank the representative of Bangladesh for his kind words addressed to my country, to me and to the Namibian delegation.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) *(spoke in Russian)*: I associate myself with my colleagues in expressing pleasure that today you, Sir, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Namibia, are presiding over this meeting of the Security Council. I would also like to thank the entire delegation of Namibia for their work in the presidency during October.

We very much appreciate the contribution made by your country, Mr. President, in promoting the noble aims of advancing the status of women. We are also grateful to Ms. Angela King and Ms. Heyzer for their statements, and particularly for the specific ideas that I am sure will be very useful in the practical work of the appropriate United Nations bodies and the Secretariat.

The words "Women", "peace" and "security" combine harmoniously, because this harmony is predetermined by nature. However, while we have selected these three words for our agenda, we are today compelled to talk about other concepts, too, the combination of which is unnatural and yet occurs all too often in today's world: women and war, women and armed conflict.

The Security Council's mandate includes its central role in the maintenance of international peace and security. A resolve to strengthen this central role was forcefully proclaimed recently by our heads of State in the Declaration unanimously adopted at the summit meeting of the Security Council. The Council's involvement in resolving a multitude of armed conflicts in various parts of the world gives us the difficult task of giving due attention to all aspects of crisis situations which pose a threat to international peace and security. In the context of discharging its primary Charter obligation, in recent years the Council has held a number of open debates and adopted some important resolutions on the protection of children, civilians and humanitarian personnel in armed conflict, and on the problems of post-conflict peace-building.

We must say that armed conflicts, wars of aggression and terrorist acts cause enormous suffering to women. They die because they find themselves in a zone of hostilities; they lose husbands, brothers, fathers and sons in war, and, lacking breadwinners, bear the full brunt of economic problems; and they fall victim to violence and wander around from one refugee camp to another. They need a sensitive approach and reliable protection.

But women, as has already been said today, are not merely helpless victims. They are an enormous strength and can provide invaluable assistance in reconciling belligerents and tending the wounds of war.

Women's peace-making potential is just starting to become a reality, and we hope that its further development will be promoted by today's discussion in the Security Council. We cannot say that so far the international community has turned a deaf ear to these problems. Recommendations and gender mainstreaming initiatives in the context of the application of international norms in the area of human rights and humanitarian law, initiatives to involve women in peace-making and peace-building, have been broadly reflected in the Beijing Platform for Action, in the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action and in the agreed recommendations on women and armed conflict of the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-fourth session.

Inescapable punishment for sexual violence against women in armed conflicts, whoever might be the perpetrator, must be meted out by the International Criminal Court. We are convinced that this body will dovetail harmoniously with the existing system for the maintenance of international peace and security — with a key role being played by the Security Council — by supplementing national judicial systems in cases when they turn out to be ineffectual. When Russia

signed the Statute of the International Criminal Court on 13 September, we demonstrated our resolve, together with other countries, to try to end impunity for, inter alia, crimes against women.

The problem of women in armed conflict was also highlighted in the special session of the General Assembly held in June entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century". The comprehensive nature of the outcome document of the special session convincingly shows that resolving humanity's challenges in all areas without the full participation of women is impossible. This applies to the important role that could, and should be played by women in eliminating and preventing crisis situations, in the proper rearing of the younger generation, in developing a culture of peace and in the dialogue among civilizations.

There is no more reliable way to protect women from the horrors of war than eliminating conflicts from people's lives. This was the thrust of Russia's proposal to strengthen strategic stability, which calls for unity of action by the international community in the military, political, soci.-economic, human rights and environmental-protection areas. As Russian President Putin stressed in his statement at the Security Council Summit on 7 September, in order to improve the crisis-prevention capability of the United Nations it is particularly important to uncover the underlying causes of conflicts, including economic and social causes, to develop a culture of crisis prevention and to focus more on anticipating events. This is the direct responsibility of the Security Council.

In trying to find answers to the severe challenges of our times, the Council should heed more closely women's voices and in its decisions pay closer attention to the gender perspective. We hope that such an approach will promote more effective protection of the rights of women and help in the attainment of the main goal: the creation of lasting peace on our Earth, so that nevermore the words "women" and "war", and "women" and "suffering" go together.

The President: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his kind words addressed to my country, the Namibian delegation and to me.

Mr. Hamer (Netherlands): First of all I want to join others in congratulating you, Sir, and your delegation for your initiative in organizing today's important and timely meeting. We welcome the increased attention of the United Nations to the position of women in situations of conflict. Women and children constitute a disproportionate number of the civilians affected by armed conflict. This open debate, taking place on the fifty-fifth United Nations Day, is an important step in focusing attention on women victims of conflicts and in getting women more actively involved in conflict prevention and conflict resolution, as well as peace-building.

The representative of France will make a statement on behalf of the European Union to which my delegation fully subscribes. I will therefore limit myself to a few observations on the issue of women and peace and security.

We were briefed today by Assistant Secretary-General King and by Ms. Heyzer of United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) on the special needs of women in conflict situations and on the important contributions they can make to peace and security. I was struck in particular by Ms. Heyzer's important analysis of the way the Security Council can involve these women. For instance, she made the points that the security of women is the best indicator of the security of a nation, and that an early-warning system must take women's voices into account. Ms. Heyzer's lucid comments underscore once again the critical input that others can give — and, in the Council's own interest, should be encouraged to give — to improve the functioning of the Security Council.

Ms. Heyzer's comments also underscore the importance of yesterday's Arria formula meeting, chaired by Ambassador Durrant, with some key non-governmental organizations active in this field. These non-governmental organizations play an essential role in ensuring that the Security Council receives the information it needs to allow women to play their important role in peacemaking.

The Netherlands has been working actively with these organizations to increase the involvement of women in peace-building activities. In Sudan and in Israel and the Palestinian territories, the Netherlands has supported women's organizations taking a more active part in conflict resolution and peace-building. We have also supported UNIFEM in the work it has undertaken in this regard — work that was referred to by Ms. Heyzer today.

A peace agreement in which half the population plays no part has little chance of success. We would

welcome more of such joint efforts to increase women's involvement in peace-building activities, and we are ready to share with others the lessons learned from the activities undertaken.

The twenty-third special session of the General Assembly encouraged the United Nations system to involve women in peacekeeping and peace-building activities, for instance by appointing more women as special envoys or special representatives of the Secretary-General. A gender perspective should be included in all policies and programmes addressing armed conflicts — not only within the United Nations system, but also in regional organizations involved in issues of peace and security, such as the Organization of African Unity, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. In this regard, the Netherlands has decided to fund a gender adviser for the OSCE. We hope that with the necessary political support such gender advisers can help to mainstream a gender perspective in peace and security matters.

A landmark breakthrough in the protection of women in armed conflicts was of course the inclusion of the issue of gender-based violence in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and other forms of sexual violence are war crimes when committed in the context of armed conflict, and under defined circumstances they constitute crimes against humanity. We have to aim at preventing such gender-based violence, take measures to support the prosecution of all persons responsible for such crimes, provide victims avenues for redress and increase awareness of the extent to which such crimes are used as weapons of war. Above all, the message must be that there can be no impunity for perpetrators of sexual violence against women.

Refugees and internally displaced persons are likely to suffer most in times of armed conflict. In such situations women, children and the elderly are most vulnerable. In its emergency aid programmes the Netherlands pays particular attention, therefore, to the needs of women refugees, focusing, for instance, on the issue of reproductive rights. We have supported projects of the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the non-governmental organization CARE in Sudan and Somalia.

We must not forget that women and children are particularly vulnerable in post-conflict situations. As they go out to the fields in search of food and firewood they are at risk of becoming victims of landmines, for instance. When setting up mine-awareness campaigns, it is therefore essential that particular attention be paid to women and children.

To conclude, we believe that this Security Council debate constitutes an important step in the protection of women in armed conflict and in realizing their potential as an important part of the solution. In the follow-up to this debate the Council should further consider concrete ways and means of protecting the human rights of women during armed conflicts and of ensuring adequate participation and representation of women in peacekeeping activities. The draft resolution presented to the Council seems to us the right way forward.

The President: I thank the representative of the Netherlands for his kind words addressed to me and my delegation.

Mr. Heinbecker (Canada) (*spoke in French*): First of all, we would like to congratulate you, Sir, for taking the initiative of holding a thematic debate on this important subject. Until recently, the role of women in peace and security has been virtually absent from the Council's discussions.

I also would like to express the appreciation of the Government of Canada to the Secretary-General for his ongoing efforts to integrate a gender perspective into the work of the United Nations. I would also like to say how much we appreciate the participation today by Assistant Secretary-General Angela King. Ms. King, we hope that your presence here will become a more regular occurrence. Finally, we are also very pleased to welcome to the Council Ms. Noeleen Heyser, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

(*spoke in English*)

The subject of today's meeting is an important element of the Security Council's ongoing work on the protection of civilians in situations of armed conflict. Canada advanced this theme as a central component of its Council membership because of the disproportionate toll contemporary armed conflict takes on civilians — the majority of these being women and children. As the Secretary-General himself noted a little earlier, modern

conflict no longer respects the line between the military and the civilian. Civilians — particularly woman and children — are not the incidental casualties of war; they are now the specific and deliberate targets. This was also a theme of the recently concluded first International Conference on War-affected Children, which was hosted by Canada in Winnipeg last month.

War does have differentiated impacts on men and women and on boys and girls, and it is good that this is finally being recognized. With resolutions 1265 (1999) and 1296 (2000) on the protection of civilians, resolutions 1261 (1999) and 1314 (2000) on children and armed conflict, and the press statement made by the Council President earlier this year on International Women's Day, the Security Council has begun to make progress in acknowledging these differentials.

We increasingly recognize the need to craft gender-sensitive measures to ensure that women and men alike benefit fully from efforts to build peace, but we need to go further. We must also ensure that our focus is not restricted to issues of the victimization of women, vital as it is to grapple with them. We must address ourselves as well to the positive contribution that women — irrespective of their age, class, ethnicity, race or any other status — can and do make to conflict prevention and to post-conflict peace-building.

In resolution 1265 (1999), the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to ensure that United Nations peace support personnel have appropriate training, including in gender-related issues. As my colleague from the United Kingdom noted earlier, in support of this effort, the Governments of Canada and the United Kingdom have developed gender training material for military and civilian personnel. By seeking to heighten gender sensitivity across a range of issues, from mine-action programming to the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the drafting of new laws and constitutions, this practical initiative complements normative efforts to ensure equitable representation of women in peace support operations, codes of conduct and so on. This initiative gives guidance on how to respond to the different experiences and needs of women in armed conflict, including respect for and promotion of women's human rights. Canada looks forward to working with other Member States in advancing this work.

Peace support operations need new skills, new attitudes and new ways of working to create the environment in which such training finds fertile ground. The deployment of women in the field — including as peacekeeping and civilian police personnel, and as special representatives of the Secretary-General and special envoys, as a number of us have said — will deliver such innovative thinking and methods of work.

Missions should also include experts to serve as focal points on gender issues or, where possible, be equipped with full units to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into mission activities. Gender considerations must likewise be central to decisions about the design and delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Women and girls are profoundly affected by conflict, whether they be caught up in its midst, in flight or in camps, dealing with its aftermath or reconstructing homes and societies. Conflict routinely imposes new burdens and changes women's roles, as Executive Director Heyzer said so eloquently.

Women also experience personal insecurity differently than men. For example, women in refugee camps are more vulnerable to violence if the camps are not designed with their particular needs in mind, as was so graphically evident in that powerful video we saw at the beginning of this meeting. Gender-sensitive humanitarian assistance can mitigate the different and negative effects conflicts have on women, especially when it takes into account changes wrought by crises, for example by recognizing new responsibilities of women as heads of households.

We welcome recent initiatives, such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's policy statement for the integration of a gender perspective in humanitarian assistance, the International Committee of the Red Cross's project on women and war, and the decision to mainstream a gender perspective into the Sphere standards. We look forward to the implementation of recent initiatives in this area, in particular with respect to the field and at headquarters, and to their evaluation. More globally, important steps are being taken to address human rights and humanitarian law violations, including women's human rights, and to end the culture of impunity.

The Statutes of the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, both

of which list rape as a crime against humanity, establish key precedents. In addition, the Rwanda Tribunal listed rape as a war crime in internal armed conflict and its first decision was precedent-setting, as it recognized rape as a tool of genocide.

The International Criminal Court will be a particularly important new tool for addressing abuses against women, having as it does a mandate to prosecute not only rape, but also sexual slavery, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and persecution on the basis of gender. In addition, the Court's staff will include judges with expertise in violence against women. I am pleased to announce that Canadian legislation to allow for the full implementation of the Rome Statute came into effect yesterday. We urge others that have not done so to sign and ratify the Statute so that this new instrument can come into force as soon as possible.

The continuing work of civil society on the issue of women and peace and security deserves special attention. Earlier this year, Canada and Norway commissioned Mrs. Graça Machel to conduct a comprehensive review of her study on children. In *the Machel Review 1996-2000*, she makes a poignant call for more protection for women and girls. We echo the support expressed by others around the table for a study of the impact on armed conflict on women.

As Ambassador Durrant and others have mentioned, yesterday we benefited from a very useful exchange of ideas with leading women's organizations. The Security Council should continue to collaborate with such organizations, whose work on the ground contributes directly to protecting women, promoting their human rights and providing for their active participation in peace processes.

Any attempt to rebuild democracy and governance in the wake of violent conflict must include gender considerations. Women's full and free participation at all levels in all phases, from relief to development, must be promoted. Without it, the long-term sustainability of peace settlements will suffer because vital voices will not have been heard; opportunities for the constructive participation of women will have been lost; and 50 per cent of the talent available for that task will have been squandered.

In Burundi, Canada financed the participation of women in the early stages of the peace process. We warmly welcomed UNIFEM's efforts as well to sustain women's participation in spite of the resistance to it by some. While this was an improvement, it was not enough. Women's participation is vital at the pre-negotiation, negotiation and implementation phases. Let us heed the request of Burundian women that they be fully involved in the implementation of the peace agreement, at all levels in all post-conflict institutions.

Canada believes that gender perspectives should be integral elements of the Security Council's work, including in the future reporting to the Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. As we proceed with the implementation of the Brahimi report on United Nations peace operations, we should also ensure that gender perspectives are fully integrated. In addition, Canada is pleased that the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has completed its report on gender and peacekeeping. As Ms. King rightly and wryly observed, we hope that we are really going to learn the lessons of the lessons learned exercise. We strongly encourage the Security Council to consider doing so. We draw particular attention to recommendations on monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

(*spoke in French*)

The issue of women and peace and security requires the Security Council's sustained attention. The Security Council has all the authority and tools necessary to make a difference. Other interlocutors within and outside the United Nations system will be vital to this endeavour and must be engaged. Canada is committed to working with others who share this interest to advance this agenda and ensure the full mainstreaming of women in the pursuit of peace and security.

The President: I thank the representative of Canada for his kind words addressed to my delegation and to me.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries, Cyprus and Malta, align themselves with this statement.

Allow me to thank you, Sir, on behalf of the European Union, for having inscribed on our agenda

the theme of women and peace and security. The Security Council's interest in the specific situation of women is recent. The Council paid tribute to their special role on 8 March 2000 on the occasion of International Women's Day, on the initiative of the President at the time, the Ambassador of Bangladesh. This debate logically follows from the interest accorded in the protection of civilians in armed conflict and the competence of the Council regarding peace and security.

Our work should not disregard those involved elsewhere in the United Nations. The question of women in conflict was one of the 12 action areas of the Beijing Platform for Action, and the follow-up special session of the General Assembly held in June 2000, which rightly included "peace" in its title, took up and strengthened the recommendations on this topic. The role of women in all situations, I have no doubt, will be taken into account by the Security Council.

My first comment is that when we deal with conflict the role of women seems to be basically passive. Women are generally mentioned only as victims. To the extent that it is civilians that suffer most from conflicts, women represent a high percentage of the victims. It is therefore important that peacekeeping forces be sensitized and trained to bear in mind in their missions women's specific protection needs. In recent years particular attention has been paid to the use of sexual violence as a method of warfare. These acts of aggression basically target women, who are sometimes the victims of systematic rape and gender-based acts of aggression. These acts must not go unpunished.

In this regard, the European Union is happy that the International Criminal Court describes as war crimes, and in specific circumstances crimes against humanity, acts of sexual violence committed in times of conflict. It appeals to all States to sign or ratify the Statute of the International Criminal Court and to incorporate its principles into their national legislation.

Women also constitute a high proportion of refugees and displaced persons, which makes them extremely vulnerable. The European Union is concerned about the development of trafficking in persons in conflict situations. We welcome the progress towards the adoption of the draft Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols, particularly that relating to trafficking in persons. We appeal for the speedy conclusion of this work.

Ending violence is a twofold challenge: on the one hand, the duty to see justice done, and, on the other, the need for reconciliation. Women have often played a decisive role in this area, particularly in Africa — I am thinking of Burundi, for example — and Latin America. We all recall the example of the Plaza de Mayo grandmothers, who ensured that the memory of the disappeared would not sink into oblivion.

This example also shows us — and this brings me to my second comment — that women are not just victims in conflict situations; they can play an essential role in conflict resolution and in rebuilding. While still under-represented in decision-making positions, women have started to participate actively in conflict resolution, in peacekeeping, in defence and in foreign affairs. It is important to create the conditions in which more of them can become stakeholders.

Within the competent bodies of the United Nations, it is taken for granted that women must be able to be heard and to have access to decision-making positions. We must increasingly appoint women with the necessary experience and competence to the posts of special representatives or envoys. Here we have a reservoir of human resources that the United Nations does not use to the fullest.

The Brahimi report (S/2000/809) gives an opportunity for an in-depth discussion of integrated strategies for conflict prevention and peace-building. It would appear that the role of women has not been mainstreamed, including in the recommendations on the training of United Nations field staff. The new importance assigned to the civilian aspects of peacekeeping operations should enable women to participate more fully. A balanced composition of teams should be sought to allow women to use their widely recognized ability to make contact with local communities and share in the realities of their daily life. We hope that this question will be taken into consideration in the follow-up to this report.

In their own countries, women must be encouraged to participate in reconciliation and rebuilding; it is something they already do. We should also study ways to better involve civil society, particularly women's organizations, in areas vital to reconstruction, such as justice. It is also essential to

maintain basic social services, particularly for women and children, in post-conflict situations.

Social cohesion, which is necessary to stabilize States emerging from conflict situations or threatened by them, is promoted by equality between men and women and respect for their rights. Rebuilding a country's democratic institutions and its political and public life must involve the participation of women in the decision-making process, because of the need for gender equality. In this regard, the European Union welcomes the initiatives taken by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, within the Stability Pact for the Balkans, the establishment of a working group which has drawn up a plan of action for gender equality.

The European Union also stresses that this question figures prominently in the Declaration adopted at the Millennium Summit, which we must implement for the benefit of the peoples concerned.

The President: I thank the representative of France for his kind words addressed to the Namibian delegation.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation would like to express its appreciation to you, Mr. President, and your delegation for convening this open meeting of the Council on this important subject.

We also commend Namibia for its constructive role in highlighting this subject, particularly in the context of the Namibia Plan of Action on "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations". Given the involvement of women in the twin issues of peace and security, the Council's consideration of the subject today is not only pertinent, but timely.

We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his introductory remarks and also take this opportunity to thank Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Angela King, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for their important contributions. Their presentations were rich both with ideas and proposals and with passion and commitment.

The Council has clearly acknowledged in several of its resolutions and Presidential Statements the harmful impact of conflict on women and children and the grave implications of this, not only for peace and security but also for socio-economic development. Perhaps more than any other organ of the United Nations, the Council is mindful of the fact that nearly all of today's conflicts occur within national boundaries, and that over 80 per cent of the victims are civilians, mainly women and their children. In many conflict situations, they are the most vulnerable members of the population, often targeted with impunity, but also often the most neglected.

Previous speakers have underscored the importance of the Beijing Conference on Women in highlighting the plight of women, particularly in conflict situations. I will therefore not repeat what has already been said other than to stress the importance of the Beijing Platform for Action and the need for sustained follow-up actions, particularly in the context of women in situations of armed conflict.

Numerous reports have suggested that gender-based abuses are not just an accident of war, nor incidental adjuncts to armed conflict. Rather, these forms of persecution reflect the inequalities and indignities that women face in their everyday lives, even in peacetime. The Special Rapporteur on violence against women has suggested that gender-based crimes, such as rape in situations of armed conflict, are not just sexual but aggressive acts, because of the humiliation and helplessness inflicted on the victims. The abuses are used as instruments to punish, intimidate, coerce, humiliate and degrade. They are inflicted both to cause physical hurt to the victims as well as to humiliate a community, an ethnic group or an enemy nation.

Events in conflict situations, such as in Kosovo, Rwanda and Sierra Leone, have highlighted the excesses that occurred, especially those affecting women, in time of war. It is a matter of serious concern that the same kind of atrocities take place all over the world, wherever there is armed conflict, and that in those situations, women and children are subjected to grave violations of their human rights.

Owing to massive population dislocations in conflict situations, women often become separated from their children. Some have been forcefully conscripted as combatants, while others have been tortured, maimed, raped, or had their limbs amputated. They have been subjected to other unspeakable crimes, crimes against humanity. Most of these women become highly traumatized because of the atrocities to which they have been subjected or that they have witnessed.

In spite of all this, they try to cope with their scars — real and psychological. Overnight they become heads of households and have to take care of orphans, the disabled and the aged. Most of them continue to shoulder this burden while residing in displaced persons and refugee camps with very meagre means for survival.

In times of conflict, women play a significant role in maintaining order in the family and society. Yet their contributions as peace educators within the family and their communities go unrecognized. Women are hardly ever considered to be an integral and essential element in political decisions, conflict resolution, peace-building and peace processes.

Despite the important perspectives women have with regard to conflict situations, peacemaking and peacekeeping, they are under-represented in decision-making positions at all levels. They are still significantly under-represented in positions of political decision-making and are unlikely to be involved in decisions concerning State security. In some conflict situations, such as in Sierra Leone, for instance, some women who had worked with the rebels, in time came to realize, often through dialogue with other women, the futility of the conflict and especially their role in it, and many of them could be used as channels to bring peace. However, their role as channels of access and communication between the warring groups are often ignored in official peace-mediating initiatives. In the post-conflict phase, the emphasis on the more formal levels of establishing systems of governance through political parties frequently leaves out the role and voices of women, who, at the informal and community levels, may have much to contribute in helping define terms for peace and security.

Although the problems have been recognized, more needs to be done in terms of follow-up actions. Several remedial actions have been identified in a number of important initiatives on women, such as the Namibia Plan of Action, as well as the 1996 Machel Report and the 2000 Machel Review. Many of these have been highlighted by Ms. King and Ms. Heyzer, as well as by other previous speakers. For reasons of brevity I shall not repeat them, other than express Malaysia's support for many of them and our intent to work constructively both in the Council, as well as in other organs of the United Nations.

An increase in the number of women in decision-making positions, as well as in peacekeeping, is crucial, but this is not all that is required. Gender impact must be a central concern in all decisions and actions with regard to peace and security and also in programmes of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants.

Gender mainstreaming as the process for assessing the implications for women of any planned public action in any area, including security, peace-building, peacemaking and peacekeeping, has been endorsed by the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as by the Commission on the Status of Women. Thanks to the Namibia Plan of Action, among others, a study assessing the extent to which a gender perspective is included in all stages of peacekeeping operations is now being undertaken within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Clearly, important steps have been taken in giving substance to the role of women in peace and security. All of these measures must be followed-up and sustained. Today's meeting of the Council and the resolution that will be adopted contribute substantively to these efforts and I should like to congratulate the Namibian Presidency for the success of this debate.

May I conclude with something, which I think is most appropriate on this occasion, to acknowledge the role of women, including the two outstanding guest speakers who have addressed the Council.

I believe that Ralph Waldo Emerson said that a sufficient definition of civilization is the influence of good women. I am not sure that it was he who said this but I would like to believe that it was said by a good and reasonable man.

The President: I should like to thank the representative of Malaysia for the kind words he addressed to my delegation.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine) Mr. President, my delegation warmly welcomes you as you preside over this meeting of the Security Council.

I should also like to thank you and the delegation of Namibia for organizing this open meeting and giving the Council an excellent opportunity to have a broad exchange of views and proposals aimed at finding effective ways to protect women and to ensure their full participation in efforts to maintain peace and security.

We thank the Secretary-General for his important statement this morning, as well as Ms. King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and Ms. Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), for their contribution to our discussion.

The question before us today is a complex one. It should also be borne in mind that a number of organs within the United Nations system are addressing various aspects of this issue, and a number of specific policies and recommendations in this respect have been worked out.

We would like to particularly commend the United Nations Development Fund for Women for its efforts to ensure that women are half of every solution. We would also like to underscore the important contribution of non-United Nations bodies and humanitarian agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations, in protecting women in armed conflicts and providing them humanitarian assistance and other necessary relief. The Security Council should provide its own perspective on the question of women's protection and women's role in the maintenance of peace and security, in accordance with its own mandate.

International resolve to safeguard women's rights in conflict situations has substantially strengthened in recent years. In response to the increased targeting of women and other civilians that has become a shameful instrument of contemporary warfare, the international community has further developed, in addition to the Fourth Geneva Convention and the two Additional Protocols of 1977, a body of law dealing with crimes against civilian populations, with special emphasis on the protection of women. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court incorporates gender-based prosecution within its jurisdiction and lists rape, enforced prostitution and other forms of sexual violence as war crimes and crimes against humanity. The ad hoc Tribunal for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia both explicitly incorporate rape as a crime against humanity within their jurisdiction. The statute of the Rwanda Tribunal also expressly includes rape, enforced prostitution and any form of indecent assault as a violation of article 3 of the Fourth Geneva Convention and a breach of Additional Protocol II.

Apart from that, the Security Council has adopted several resolutions on the protection of children and civilians in armed conflict wherein it urged all parties to take special measures to protect women and girls from rape and other forms of gender-based violence.

However, in spite all international efforts, women continue to be the most vulnerable victims of armed conflicts. With a rapid proliferation of inter-State wars and other hostilities, civilians increasingly represent the overwhelming majority of war victims, with women and girls targeted for the most brutal forms of attack, including rape, sexual mutilation, sexually humiliating treatment and forcible impregnation. Sexual violence brings with it the risk of HIV/AIDS. The increase in inter-State and inter-ethnic hostilities in the last decade and the increased number of refugees became a catalyst for a major explosion in the spread of the disease, and it has yet to show up statistically. In addition to that, women also experience the trauma of losing relatives and friends in times of armed conflict and of having to take responsibility for the care of surviving family members. They also constitute the majority of refugees and displaced persons.

My country is greatly concerned about this situation and strongly condemns the targeting of women in situations of armed conflict. In this context, I would like to stress that the Security Council should give special consideration to the particular needs of women affected by armed conflict when considering action aimed at promoting peace and security.

It is important that the Secretary-General's reports to the Council dealing with specific conflict situations and developments in the field also incorporate gender perspectives in addressing various aspects of conflict analysis and conflict resolution. I share the view expressed by previous speakers that the Council should also request the Secretary-General to ensure that personnel involved in United Nations peacekeeping and peace-building operations have appropriate training on the protection, rights and particular needs of women. Security Council resolutions setting up or extending peacekeeping operations should provide a clear mandate to address the protection of women and girls affected by conflict against all sexual violence, abduction, enforced prostitution, trafficking and threats imposed by military, paramilitary and other groups.

We believe the Security Council has a special responsibility to support women's participation in

peace processes by ensuring respective gender balance in United Nations peacekeeping missions. The Council has already recognized, through the statement of its President on the occasion of International Women's Day, the important role of women in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace-building and has underscored the importance of promoting an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes when addressing armed or other conflicts.

My delegation heartily applauds the efforts and dedication of all women serving United Nations peacekeeping and humanitarian missions under very difficult and quite frequently dangerous circumstances in conflict and post-conflict areas. The presence of women in United Nations missions can foster confidence and trust among the local population, critical elements in any peacekeeping mission. In performing their tasks, women are perceived to be compassionate, unwilling to opt for force over reconciliation, willing to listen and learn and are widely seen as contributors to an environment of stability and morality that fosters the progress of peace.

At the same time, women are still under-represented in decision-making with regard to conflict. Their initiatives and visions for peace and security are rarely heard of during peace negotiations. In this regard, I would like to stress that women should not be viewed primarily as victims of armed conflict; the international community should use the potential of women as agents of preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peace-building. The peace-building initiatives of women in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Cambodia, Rwanda, Mozambique and Guatemala indicate how precious their contribution to peace can be.

Being an active participant of the United Nations peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts, Ukraine has also contributed women civilian police to United Nations peacekeeping missions. We reiterate our readiness to continue working constructively with other Members States in order to ensure the protection of women in armed conflicts and women's participation in peace processes. We are confident that further development of peacekeeping and peace-building teams, with women and men as equal partners, would improve the efficiency of peacekeeping and peace maintenance throughout the world.

The delegation of Ukraine looks forward to a positive outcome of this important initiative on the women and peace and security. We hope that many useful ideas put forward by many delegations at this meeting will be incorporated in the respective Security Council draft resolution.

The President: I thank the representative of Ukraine for his kind words addressed to me and my delegation.

Mr. Kassé (Mali) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to express my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you preside over this important meeting, Mr. Minister, and at your having taken this initiative. We also wish to thank, through you, the Secretary-General; Mrs. Angela King, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women; Mrs. Noleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); and the delegation of Namibia to the Security Council, led by Ambassador Andjaba. We also thank all those who are present today.

Peace is our first objective, and it is undeniably here, in the Security Council, that peace must be ensured. But allow me to add that without women, it is difficult to ensure peace.

The women of Mali did not wait for the Republic of Mali to achieve national sovereignty to become involved in the prevention, settlement and management of conflict. In traditional society, conflict resolution was a collective effort, and the sacrifices that had to be made were in the interest of the entire community. Thus, women played a very important, endogenous role.

In conflicts between communities, it is not unusual for warring communities to resort to marriage to restore peace. That makes it possible to seal a pact of friendship, solidarity or cooperation.

Similarly, women have always been considered a part of the entire community and of the family, and not just the wife of a single individual. Allied societies submit to the rules of marriage to avoid breaking the social relationship established through the link of marriage. Declared conflicts between communities linked by marriages are generally quelled by the intervention of women, through whom that matrimonial linkage is established.

African women have always contributed to facilitating and supporting as a matter of priority the intermingling of tribes and the strengthening of unity through the bonds of matrimony, as they are the strongest links in the chain of solidarity, fraternity and harmony. However, we must now recognize that individualism, which was formerly proscribed, has gained ground on these values to such an extent that it has led to internal conflict. Africa has thus entered the most troubling period of its history.

Mali has not been able to escape that scourge. In 1990 a Tuareg rebellion broke out in the north of the country. As in other parts of the world, women do not usually decide to go to war and they do not wage it. Nevertheless, they suffer tremendously as a result of wars and lose those dearest to them — fathers, husbands and sons — and even lose their honour and their dignity. Aware of this fact, the women of Mali decided they would manage not only atrocities and their devastating consequences, but that they would also participate actively in preserving peace and national unity. This conscious decision involved women in the search for peaceful solutions to the crisis that shook northern Mali and had various effects.

Those effects included appeals to mobilize for peace; the development and implementation of a plan of action and information campaign for peace; the national mobilization of women around slogans calling for peace and reconciliation; the mobilization of resources for peace; the involvement of women in the prevention and management of conflict and in the consolidation of peace; humanitarian activities focused on civilian victims; participation in preliminary negotiations for the restoration of peace; and, finally, participation in negotiating and finalizing the National Peace Pact, which brought peace back to northern Mali. With the restoration of peace, the women of Mali continue their struggle, together with the rest of civil society, to consolidate peace, and extend a hand to all other women in countries undergoing crisis.

The women of Mali remain convinced that in order to ensure the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations — which today have progressed from traditional peacekeeping operations to multidimensional activities in support of peace — the principles of gender equity and equality must find a place in all missions, at all levels, in order to guarantee men and women the same role in every element of the peace process: peacekeeping, reconciliation and peace-building. In this connection, we firmly support the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations, which was adopted at Windhoek on 31 May 2000.

During the Security Council Summit of 7 September 2000, the President of the Republic of Mali, who presided over the Council, welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative by declaring that the report submitted by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi is a milestone in the process that will make the United Nations "a truly credible force for peace." (*S/PV.4194, p. 20*)

At a time when mankind must more than ever before be the measure of the new millennium, and when people expect the United Nations to be the promoter and guarantor of a world of progress for all — a world of peace, solidarity and sharing — the Security Council must demonstrate a clear and discernible capacity for action that both deters and reassures. To achieve that capacity we must fully integrate women as never before as partners and beneficiaries in all aspects of a peace process: peacekeeping, reconciliation and peace-building.

Mali is studying with great interest the recommendations that have been made with regard to the topic under consideration, and will actively and positively participate in the negotiations on the relevant draft resolution.

The President: I thank the representative of Mali for his kind words addressed to the Namibian delegation.

There are a number of speakers remaining on my list. With the concurrence of the members of the Council, I intend to suspend the meeting now.

The meeting was suspended at 1.30 p.m.